



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

435 Chapel Rd., Suite B., South Windsor, CT 06074
Tel: 860-500-7796 Fax: 860-500-7798 Web: www.hbact.org

*Your Home
Is Our
Business*

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Public Hearing
Testimony
March 15, 2023**

**To: Chairmen Rep. Currey, Sen. McCrory, Ranking Members Rep. McCarty,
Sen. Berthel, and distinguished Members of the Education Committee**

From: Jim Perras, CEO

**Regarding: S.B. No. 1197 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT. (Support)**

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with almost nine hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses consists of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

The HBRA-CT thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Section 6. of SB 1197 and urges its passage. Sec. 6 of the bill would create a funding mechanism under the State Department of Education (SDE) to provide financial assistance to schools for each student that successfully completes a pre apprenticeship program certified for use by the Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL).

In 2022, the HBRA-CT worked in collaboration with the CT DOL to get a nationally recognized residential construction pre apprenticeship curriculum certified for use in Connecticut. It is currently being used in one Connecticut High School, with three more expected to utilize the program in the Fall of 2023. Students who complete this program receive OSHA-10 cards and 300 hours towards a certified apprentice program in a skilled trade, including; HVAC, Plumbing and Electrical making them immediately marketable to employers and setting a great foundation for a rewarding career in the trades.

In Governor Lamont's Budget Address he called for bold action on housing and the need to increase housing production to meet the diverse needs of Connecticut residents and protect our most vulnerable populations experiencing housing instability and homelessness. To meet the housing targets set by the Administration we need to immediately begin to grow skilled labor in the residential construction workforce.

Supporting this legislation has the additional benefit of helping to address low housing production numbers in the state of Connecticut, in turn helping to alleviate the housing accessibility and affordability crisis we are currently experiencing. Based on current U.S. Census data, Connecticut's housing production numbers are among the lowest in the Country (Second only to Illinois) and a contributing factor is our aging residential construction workforce which also happens to be amongst the oldest in the Country.

Section 6 of SB 1197 is modeled after existing law in the state of Colorado titled the Career Development Incentive Program, where the strategy of assisting schools that offer pre apprenticeship programs with additional resources has been widely successful at growing the number of schools that offer these programs and the number of students who successfully complete them.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Sec. 6. of SB 1197, the HBRA-CT respectfully urges its passage.